A little tete a tete

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/9182629.

Rating:	Not Rated
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Categories:	F/M, Gen, M/M, Multi
Fandoms:	Hannibal Lecter Series - All Media Types, Hannibal (TV)
Relationships:	Hannibal Lecter & Will Graham, Team Sassy Science - Relationship, Alana Bloom & Hannibal Lecter & Will Graham, Beverly Katz & Will Graham, Beverly Katz &a Hannibal Lecter, Alana Bloom & Beverly Katz
Characters:	Beverly Katz, Alana Bloom, Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham, Jimmy Price, Brian Zeller, Jack Crawford
Additional Tags:	AU, seasons 1-3+, Friendship, Questions, Alana say what?, Dialogue, Jealousy, yeah - Freeform, quite a bit of that, jealous Alana, Jealous Hannibal, everybody duck, Fight Club - Freeform, better living through pharmaceuticals, Team Sassy Science, Slow Burn, Dear Will, a bit spaced out
Language:	English
Series:	Part 7 of The Dr Plushy Pants Collection
Stats:	Published: 2017-01-03 Completed: 2017-01-04 Words: 5,680 Chapters: 4/4

A little tete a tete

by AtticusCrete

Summary

Alana faces a sudden realisation! And she and Hannibal have the mother of all fights about it. Or something. Team Sassy Science wish they'd brought popcorn and soda.

Welcome to the Dr Plushy Pants AU where there is humour, tenderness, familiar faces, different deaths (squee), and some angst, corresponding fluff, slow burn, and divergences (Franklyn lives!). Watch for tags for each chapter/part. Canon adjacent. Maybe a second cousin twice removed - some events out of sequence.

It spans beyond the three seasons, and starts with 'a terrible name for a Museum', I've written bits from along the timeline. The ending of the whole series is already written. I'm currently going back to fill in the gaps.

And sorry about the titles, I'm rubbish at titles, and summaries, and notes, *shrugs* in my first four weeks of writing I clocked just under 100,000 words, what can I say? Feedback and friendliness gratefully received. I answer all comments, though it can take me a bit of time.

In real life I'm an archaeologist, and have other things I'm supposed to write and read. But I'm always delighted to hang out here...

Chapter 1

Alana waves to Hannibal across the lawns and paths in front of the University. She's a little early, but so is he. They smile easily at one another as Hannibal joins her at the bottom of the steps into the main entrance.

'Shall we get coffee, the staff common room usually has a decent blend?'

'Certainly, if that is what you would like'

Alana studies him out of the corner of her eye. He's dressed as per usual, his hair and general appearance is as per usual (formal, controlled, precise), but there's the faintest frisson of something. She's arranged this meeting to follow through on the conversation she hadn't really been able to have with Hannibal when she had visited Will in hospital a few days ago.

Will would wake for a few minutes and then spontaneously, sometimes mid sentence fall asleep again. It had made for a complex conversation with a lot of repetition and not much progression. She's hoping to do better today.

She has a go at starting on neutral territory (she hopes) 'When is Will getting out of hospital?'

'I think they have decided to keep him for a few more days yet. He has not responded quite as they would like to some of the medication. You'll have seen some evidence of that in the way he suddenly fell asleep multiple times. I suspect him staying asleep for a while might be beneficial. But we'll see what his physician says.'

Alana looks at Hannibal and asks slowly 'I didn't know you'd seen that much of him, you seemed, closer than I'd anticipated'

'Oh? How so?'

'Didn't he say he'd just come from you when he was taken by Stammetts?'

'Yes. He and Beverly, Jimmy and Zeller were with me at my Baltimore office. We were discussing the Stammetts case. Although the Science Team (by which I mean Jimmy in this instance) are somewhat regrettably insisting on calling it the fun guy case. Hannibal smiles slightly at Alana, but there is merriment in his eyes.

'Have you seen him apart from the formal sessions and FBI things?' Alana, can't quite help herself from asking. She doesn't know why, but the whole idea of Hannibal and Will being close is disconcerting. There's something bothering her about it.

'Alana, is that a professional enquiry, or the curiosity of a friend?'

'Can it be both?' She replies,

'I don't know, can it?'

This is classic psychiatric dialogue, endless questions expanding on the one before,

'I think it can be, yes, do you?'

Hannibal sighs, sometimes the game seems less worth playing. 'I've met with Will for eight office based sessions, two of which were FBI mandated, he's no longer officially a patient, three times at the lab or in the field, once in Will's absence because the team was looking for him after he was kidnapped, and three times in a more sociable setting, two of those in the company of Beverly Katz, one with the whole team. Does that give you the information you require.'

'So, in the ten weeks since you met him you've seen him 14 times?'

'I have not included the occasions I have visited him in hospital, it seems hardly fair if he is not in a position to refuse the encounter. So I am merely counting the occasions when he was a voluntary participant.'

'You've seen him twice a week?'

'I believe that is what I've just said. Why?'

'Are you going to keep seeing him at the same rate?'

'Alana, I think I'm going to ask again, why? Or are you avoiding the question?'

'I think I'm deflecting. I'm not entirely sure why I'm asking or what I want to know. It just seems improbable somehow'

'That I should spend time with someone, or Will in particular?'

'No, yes. Maybe? I don't know. It just feels odd'

'Alana, I know you've been professionally careful around Will. Do you think I am a threat to him?'

'Not intentionally, no. But he's very vulnerable. And you're not a weak personality'

'He has nothing to fear at my hands'

'I believe you. It's just..'

.....

Alana leaves that conversation still ruffled. It's not that she especially thought of Will as her special friend but. It's just that, she had to find out from Zeller that Will was in the hospital, Oh. Wait. That's it. Her friend has been co-opted. Not just by Bev, she knew that would happen when she introduced them, but the rest of the lab? And now Hannibal.

Her impression of Will built up over several years is that he's a loner. Quiet, tense, stiff, slightly angry. She has a sudden moment when she realises that Will isn't always like this, it's

not even his default self, it's how he is when he's out of his comfort zone, as a mechanism for coping.

When he's with people who are there just to be there with him, with no expectation beyond that he's fine. Better than fine. And it's taken Hannibal to make this visible. She should call him and thank him for his insight.

She's been projecting a whole pile of instabilities and insecurities on to Will, which may in fact be her own, and which he can't help but mirror at least in part. She knew to be careful but her consciousness of this has actually blinded her to who is really there, and re-enforced the image. It's like a self-fulfilling prophecy, she thought he'd be unstable, she treated him as though he was, so he mirrors this and behaves unstably. She could smack herself.

Maybe this means she'd been too hasty in rejecting something more with Will. That had certainly been a route she thought might be open at one point. She'll have a think. She gets out her cell

'Bev? Hey it's Alana, are you free for a drink one evening this week?'

.....

A little qu'est ce que c'est que ca?

Chapter Summary

Alana and Bev have a conversation - where they have diametrically opposed hoped for outcomes, but only one of them knows this.

(Ha. If only we'd had more Bev and Alana interaction in the show...)

'Hey girl. Still cute then?'

Alana smiles at her friend. 'Yes, thank you Bev, I can rely on you.'

Bev shrugs 'you know how to work a wrap dress and boots. And the little cardigan thing. Sweet.'

'I'm glad to see you. I'm just a bit tired and out of sorts.' They both settle into the booth, waiting for the waiter to take their order.

'Ok. So is this a one mimosa conversation, or six and I'll hold your hair out of your face when you puke, conversation?'

'Maybe between the two somewhere.'

'Really? Wow. I was kidding! What's the score?'

'Have you been to see Will in hospital?'

'Sure, yesterday. I'm going to his place tomorrow to take some shopping. Hannibal's taking him home from hospital tomorrow afternoon and he said he'd get some proper food en route, but I know what that means, so I'm getting Will real food that he can microwave and that comes in single trays, and have more ingredients in the list than is sensible or that you need a degree in chemistry to understand. That and pizza pockets, and maybe pop tarts if I can find the ones that glow in the dark. Why?'

'How did he seem yesterday?'

'What, Will?'

Alana nods.

'His medication is making him a little bit loopy. He said some outrageously disinhibited things. It was very funny. Especially when he realised and then got embarrassed and then said something worse.'

'Yes I witnessed that, I saw him a couple of days ago. Hannibal was there.'

'No surprise there. They're very funny together.'

'Bev. What does that mean exactly?'

'What do you mean, what does that mean?'

'Hannibal and Will. Funny. Together?'

Beverly looks at her friend just catching the tone of something she's not so familiar with from Alana. She does a quick mental review of what she knows about Alana and the two men. She used to be Hannibal's mentee, and she's been Will's friend for several years. Maybe she's feeling possessive over either, or even both of them?

'Sweetie, we're glad Will has a new friend, aren't we? Or at least another someone who is nice to him. He's got enough friends now he needs more than one hand to count them on, that aren't dogs, this is a good thing. You wanted him to get out more, or is this about Hannibal? In which case you'd know better than me how many friends he has? Or if he's being weird. What's got you all funny?'

'I feel strangely protective. About both of them. For different reasons. I found myself realising that despite the fact that he's in hospital, well, let's just say I'm seeing Will more clearly than I have before'

Double shit, thinks Bev. 'Oh. In what way honey?'

'Oh, you know. Do you remember when I met him, he was so interesting psychologically, and then I found out it was a quirk of neurology really and the fascinating way he applied it, that made him who he is?'

'I remember you saying he was nice, and unstable, and not relationship material'

'Oh that. Well. That was then. I think it's been an enlightening week. So he's getting out of hospital tomorrow? I could tell Hannibal I'll get him instead. I'm sure Will would like that, and Hannibal won't have to drive all over Virginia and Maryland.'

SHIT, TREBLE SHIT, with bells on. 'That's so sweet of you. I think it's all been fixed though' shit shit shit, she can't think of anything persuasive, aaarghhhh.

'Not to worry, I'll just text Hannibal and let him know. When's Will due out, did you say the afternoon?'

'Errrr, yes' if she could Beverly would head desk the bar table in front of her. Noooooooo.

'Great, are you going to the bar? I think I will have a second. I'll just text Hannibal and let him know'

Bev goes to the bar praying Alana won't mention her in the text to Hannibal. She can't even begin to think how she can tell him what's just transpired. She doesn't know him well enough

to know how he'll react. And boy she has seen how fierce he can be. And she'd so like to not be on the receiving end of a furious Hannibal. Brrrr. And not in a good way. She racks her brains thinking about whether it's just possible that she can tell Will. Probably not. He's not really well enough.

.....

Later that evening Hannibal reads the various text messages that arrived whilst he was attending a charity board meeting. He's the vice chair and the chair is an idiot of the first water. However they have a shared history of several years and Hannibal acknowledges that the past, although another country, does mean something. So he is feeling a little out of sorts when he gets to Alana's message

Hannibal, hi, I hope you're well. It was lovely to see you. I've just realised that Will is coming out of hospital tomorrow, I thought I'd get him, just to save you the bother of those long drives. Were you at the Felipe meeting this evening? I hope Douglas wasn't such an idiot! Talk soon, I hope, Alana

Hannibal reads the message. He then reads it twice more. He realises he has almost cracked the stem of the glass he is holding. Damn. He considers carefully. He takes the glass to the kitchen, holds it up to one of the halogen lights to discern if he has actually broken it or not. Maybe a tiny fracture. He sets it to one side. He will look again in daylight. He ponders. And calls Beverly.

'I know what you're going to say before you say it, and I really didn't suggest it or tell her, I tried to stop her, I didn't know what to say, sorry' Beverly gets this all out before Hannibal has spoken a word.

'Will you tell me what happened? I realise I am placing you in a delicate position and that you may feel you have conflicting loyalties. So I will understand if you do not feel able to'

'No. it's ok. It was stupid. I don't even know what Alana is thinking. Actually that's not true I think I do. I think, seeing Will happy and laughing reminded her that when he's good he's really great. And she reminded me of a conversation she and I had a couple of year's back. She said then that Will wasn't relationship material because he is too unstable. I think she might be revising that thought.'

'Oh.'

No shit, thought Beverly.

'And would Will be glad she is revising her views of him, does he harbour hopes of being relationship material for Dr Bloom'

Even the frost in Hannibal's voice chills Beverly to the bone.

'Honestly? I really don't think so. That's not the vibe I've got from him at all. But I have only known him a couple of months.'

Beverly feels like she is dancing on hot coals, but also has the smarts to think 'frost and fire'? Neat trick Hanni-baby, before her mind veers away from even thinking that in case it ever falls out of her mouth.

'All I've ever seen from Will is a kind of general fondness towards Alana. It's not like with..' she stops.

She's never actually had permission from Will to tell Hannibal any more than she already has. And whilst she might have plans for them, they are, as yet unfounded in a reality that either of them have expressed. Shit. Again.

'Yes?' Hannibal is like crystal, all sharp edges if it gets broken.

'Errrr. I did think of asking Will what to do, but I think it might be too much for him?'

'I believe that is so. He is fortunate to have you Beverly.' It's not the first time he has said it, and she sincerely hopes that if she ever pisses the good doctor off, he will remember this.

'Hannibal, what do you suggest? Do you want me to ...' she tails off, really at a loss.

'Thank you. I believe it will be best if I speak directly to Dr Bloom.'

'Ok. That seems like a good way forwards' fucking hell I don't want to be anywhere near that conversation!

Tbc

A little La Fin Absolue du Monde

Chapter Summary

There's a wee bit of a showdown! Alana and Hannibal have at it...

This is the Dr Plushy Pants AU, so she's not actually going to shoot him, well not for Mizumono reasons!

'Absolutely not Alana, this is not acceptable. You're behaviour is utterly unnecessary and quite rude'

'You're kidding Hannibal. From you of all people I think that's a little exaggerated wouldn't you say? And I'm sorry, but you won't change my mind'

'I am not trying to change your mind. This is not a negotiation'

'You can't tell me what to do. You're not my tutor now'

'Wow, what the fuck is going on in there? And why are you out here?' Zeller looks quizzically at Beverly and Jimmy. He's just skirted around the edge of Hannibal and Alana having what is now almost a shouting match, to get into the refrigerated evidence room.

'There's a little bit of an argument going on.'

'I can hear that. But why?'

'They're arguing over who gets to pick Will up from hospital and take Will home'

Brian looks at them as though they've gone mad 'you've got to be kidding me?'

'Sadly not.' Says Jimmy.

'Ok. Right. That's way too weird. Why here?'

'Alana texted Hannibal yesterday, he called her to meet, you know, the whole, better face to face thing, she has a meeting with Jack, he needed to come this way to collect Will, and kaboom. Gasoline meet lighter. I swore to myself I wouldn't be around for this' Bev sighs.

If anything they've got slightly louder. Sadly she and Jimmy had got caught in the cool room where the bodies are left in big stainless steel drawers. Alana and Hannibal are blocking their exit to the lab and the safety of the rest of the FBI building. They'd both been too chicken to

venture out. Jimmy also because he's enjoying it just a little too much. Beverly because she is terrified they will both call on her for back up.

'Where's Jack?' Zeller asks 'can't he sort this out?'

'Ah.' Says Jimmy 'it's just possible he might have gone to get Will to bring him back here so that he's not left standing outside the hospital in a drafty hospital gown clutching a brown paper bag with his things in'

'Do they know that?'

'Not exactly. They'd barely started round one when his cell went off and he upped and left. I reckon it was the guard at the hospital letting him know Will was ready to be released if someone came and got him' Jimmy grimaces.

'Are you going to tell them?' Brian is looking for Jimmy to nod, but he scoffs 'are you kidding? Have you been listening? There is no way the messenger doesn't get shot in this scenario'

All three of them look out at their colleagues, Alana looks half wild, she's leaning slightly forward arms down by her side, flushed cheeks. Hannibal is standing straight but with his feet apart, and his head just slightly lowered. He looks utterly terrifying, and the light is doing him lots of favours, making his cheekbones cast demonic shadows on his face. Alana is foruntate in that for all she is close to actually shouting she hasn't gone shrill. Shrill always ends in defeat. Hannibal is just own the whole space loud.

'How long?' Brian asks?

'Well I've lost touch with my feet so I'm thinking between 40 and 50 minutes' Jimmy says sadly. 'If I'd known we'd be stranded I'd have brought a go bag in here with me' he pauses 'or popcorn and a large soft drink, you know, for the big Vegas knock out' they have to stifle a collective giggle.

'It's probably more than just about collecting Will isn't it?' Zeller asks 'I mean, 40 minutes. I know he's kinda cute, but..' he tails off,

'did you say he has a cute butt, cos honestly I think that's the issue here' Jimmy sasses straight back at him.

Hannibal is now rumbling at Alana 'wow, doesn't he sound like some thunder god? Looks like one too, a really ancient dawn of creation one that no one worships any more cos he is just such a bitch?' Beverly and Brian both look at Jimmy 'what? What? S'true'

Brian has started hopping his feet are so cold, he's about to suggest they try for a three way storming of the barricade when Alana shouts at Hannibal again, and it's round, well, they've lost count. In the midst of the shouting the door at the other end of the lab opens and Jack comes in pushing a slightly still spaced out Will in a wheelchair.

They are met with silence. Team Sassy Science rush into the lab, trying not to look like frozen popsicles. They try hard to catch no-one's eye. Jack does his 'what-the-very-fuck?' look.

'Hey. That's nice. You're all here. I've never had a welcoming committee before, thanks folks' Will smiles at everyone 'Hey, Hannibal you're here, great, can you take me home from here in a bit?' Hannibal has to physically resist shooting a victorious look at Alana. Alana bites her lip.

The Sassy Science Team step up and offer coffee, or biscuits or candy. Will wants coffee. Everyone else decides they do too. He seems oblivious to the atmosphere and just joshes everyone, thanking them for finding him so quickly before he was compost. He suggests to Alana that she come and see him at home for tea or something in the next day or two. She tries not to shoot a triumphant look at Hannibal, and smirks instead.

Hannibal however looks quite serene. He won this battle. 'Huh,' thinks Alana 'he won't win this war though!' She glances at Bev who sees the look on Alana's face. Oh shit, Bev thinks. This is going to get worse before it gets better.

A little bordel de merde

Chapter Summary

The battle was won, but what of the war?

This is not how Hannibal had anticipated his afternoon would pan out. He had imagined he would take Will back to Wolf Trap from the hospital. They'd talk, he'd cook, he'd meet the dogs (hmmm, he must put lint roller tape on his shopping list), he'd be amusing, Will would be quirky, it would be invigorating, and would encourage Will to regard him ever more positively.

Instead. Well. He and Alana have had a frank exchange of views. Very frank. And rather publicly. Probably fortunately, for Alana.

Jack has collected Will.

The science team have been themselves, Sassy. Jimmy in particular, who'd said to Hannibal 'hey Dr L, thanks for the backstage pass.' And on seeing Hannibal's face said 'what? Too soon? Hey man, you totally won, I was rooting for you all the way. I know a good bet when I see one' he'd even winked. Hannibal, and oh he was loathe to admit it, did feel slightly smug at that.

Now, however, he is at the hospital. But not with Will. Oh no, not with Will. Alana has indeed, for all that she lost, taken Will home. Because? Because Franklyn.

Franklyn Froidveaux is a challenging patient. Not because of the enormous complexity of his tortured soul, writhing in torment at the overwhelming darkness threading its way through his life threatening the, well you get the idea. Rather he has commonplace, though extensive neuroses.

Being neurotic can be crippling. Franklyn has made it almost an art form (Hannibal silently berates himself for being this uncharitable towards someone who is both his patient and who tries his patience, it is after all a psychiatric 'practice', and with Franklyn around Hannibal finds it has extended his understanding of the need to practice all sorts of different things, as well as a range of therapeutic options.)

Hannibal knows that were Franklyn not neurotic, he would almost certainly be something far worse. At least as far as the socially acceptable mores of twenty first century Baltimore go. It's something Hannibal knows all about.

Today though Franklyn has been a pain, no, no, he mustn't think like that, Franklyn has been in pain, and has possibly taken slightly more of his medication than he should. Hence the

hospital visit. He's been admitted as an emergency.

Hannibal has been called in as his attending psychiatrist. He's just had a short conversation with the ward doctor. They remember each other vaguely. Hannibal was an ER surgeon here, and this doctor frequently treated those who came in as an emergency but who ultimately needing psychiatric care rather than solely physical support. They have engaged in mutually respectful conversation and have progressed on to a treatment strategy.

It's a tiring interlude, in particular because Franklyn is needlessly and pathetically grateful for Hannibal coming to the hospital. He's tried to explain that Franklyn needs not feel this sort of obligation, it's a part of Hannibal's doctor/patient responsibilities to respond in this way at such times. But Franklyn wants to feel just a little special, that Hannibal has gone out on a limb for him, to make sure he is alright.

This is a tricky balance, mostly Hannibal wants to shift Franklyn's focus from his therapist to his therapy. At the same time, now he is hospitalised it is important to deal with the current manifestations of his thought processes. This means finding a way for Franklyn to feel supported without depending on that support, in particular from Hannibal.

Hannibal sighs. Not how he thought he'd be spending his afternoon, and by the looks of it, at least some of the evening.

.....

Alana and Beverly are in Will's kitchen in Wolf Trap. Beverly has been unpacking three large bags of shopping. As promised they contain a range of chemical compounds bound together into something we call food in the early 21st century. Regrettably she couldn't find glow in the dark pop tarts, but she did find the ones that go crackle in your mouth when you eat them. Result. Alana is not delighted to see her friend.

In the living room Will is laid out on his couch, with a doggy duvet and a feeling of at least partial contentment. He'd been disappointed that Hannibal couldn't, after all Will's careful planning, bring him home. His hospital stay gave him a fairly unique opportunity to enhance his relationship (yeah ok, it's a burgeoning friendship, he knows that, but hey a guy can dream can't he?) with the doctor.

And Will has been a little bit naughty about it. He doesn't think Hannibal will mind (at least, not in three years time on their first wedding anniversary, hey, I said a guy can dream didn't I, and if a guy can dream, he can at least dream big, dream big or go home! Oh. He went home. Damnit).

It's just possible that Will wasn't quite as spaced out on his meds as he might have appeared. And now he's pretty sure that Hannibal likes him it makes it possible for Will to do a bit of reflecting back too. His empathy thing (he is Deanna Troi but without the hair, or boobs, or Riker thing, actually maybe the Riker thing? If he looked like a buttoned up European doctor with three piece suits and a sexy overcoat. What?) can sometimes work in his favour.

He saw the look on Hannibal's face when he took the call from the hospital. He hid it well, but Hannibal was seething. Will could see it. Hannibal had been looking forwards to it too.

Good. And there is definitely something going down between Hannibal and Alana. What's that all about? She'd look mighty pissed off when Beverly arrived about an hour after they did.

This being friends thing? It's a tortuous process. And Will can't help but be swamped sometimes. Swamped by other people, by work, by class, by bringing things back from dark places that like the furniture of his mind and sit around having house parties in his brain with or without Will's acquiescence. Or indeed an invite, the party's on but he's not home.

But at this precise moment he does know his own mind. He likes Hannibal. Not just a physical attraction, though dayum! That guy can wear a suit. Will is almost sure he does it purposely. Philip Larkin once said that the sexiest word in the English language is 'unbutton', Will thinks a lot about Hannibal's buttons. Undoing them, pressing them. He has a happy shudder, and his cock stirs just slightly. One of the dogs grumbles.

But it's also a cerebral thing. They really talk to each other. About all kinds of things. Being in hospital Hannibal has found all kinds of excuses to check in on him and talk. Will wonders if both he and Hannibal are talk starved.

People talk about being touch starved (he knows he is, god he'd been pathetically grateful for kind competent nurses' hands turning him and manhandling him around, just for the feel of proper intended deliberate touch), but lots of adults simply don't get the opportunity to talk, back and forwards, a conversation. It is one of the reasons he likes the science team so much. They talk. To each other, they listen, it's challenging, invigorating. And he loves how Hannibal's mind works. He doesn't agree with everything that comes out of it, but so what?

He can hear Alana and Beverly in the kitchen. Beverly has brought terrible food which he might have to hide if Hannibal ever comes here. Will is trying to think of a new way he can make that happen.

Alana pops her head round the door 'I thought I'd make pizza and salad if you're hungry?' 'Sure, that sounds nice, did Bev get any garlic bread, we could have that too' 'I'll ask her, I'm not sure Bev can stay though'.

Bev has overheard this. She's absolutely determined not to be ousted. She loves Alana, but this is a bit much. 'Yeah there's garlic bread, I'll do a couple of bits with cheese, I got the stuff that says it is cheese food, that really melts? Do you want a tray Will or to sit at the table?'

Will decants the dogs who pant happily at their favourite two-legs. 'Let's try the table. At least I can tell Hannibal we had a proper sit down meal if he asks if I've eaten. It'd be nice not to lie or make him feel he has to drive for an hour to make sure I eat'

Alana looks at him sharply 'I'm sure Hannibal wouldn't feel the need to do that. He'd just want to be sure you're ok. You were his patient' Will catches a cynical look on Bev's face, she sees him looking and offers him a bland smile. Oh, thinks Will, uh-oh. It must be on his face because Bev gives him the look that says 'yeah fucker, and wotcha going to do about this then?'

.....

Pizza is good, garlic bread with cheese food is good, the company is good. They sit around and chat, through salad and cake (I think it's cake, it might be lembas, ready to survive a nuclear winter or zombie apocalypse, there's no expiry date on the packaging), through coffee, through another cup of coffee. Will suddenly realises Bev is trying to last Alana out. She's determined not to leave before her. This must be worse than he realises. Ok he can run with this, or, given his current physical condition he can limp slowly.

'Guys (Alana winces at this), you've both been great, but I'm done in. Let's wash up, actually let's you two wash and dry and I'll sit here directing, and then I'm kicking you out.' The two women can only agree, and thirty minutes later they're both on their way out.

Bev punches him lightly on the shoulder, 'I'll text you - meaningful things!' She smirks at him. He smiles back, just one side of his mouth lifting. Alana almost dives in for a hug but settles on a double hand squeeze. 'I'll call you, when you're better let's do something properly. It's lovely to see you doing so well' Will winces internally. Alana somehow always makes it sound like he's ill. But he smiles at her too. He does like her, a lot, just not... eventually the three of them disentangle and the two women go to their cars. Alana's up and leaving first, Beverly takes a moment to rest her head on the steering wheel. God.

.....

Later that night Will is sitting on the couch again. He has been dozing off and on, listening to a record of Debussy 'La Mer' in the background, one of his grandmaw's old LPs. He loves this record. Not just the music. The record itself, it crackles slightly, it's nearly thirty years old. The sound of the sea. The sound of love. He closes his eyes.

Will, so glad to spend some time with you properly, lovely evening. Let's do something soon, just the two of us he smiles ruefully. He goes years without anyone batting an eyelid in his direction or indeed him batting an eyelid in anyone else's, and look at him now.

Later

*Will. Thanks for pizza. Glad you're ok. Will fill you in on what's going on when it's not 1am. Willard Wiggins says hi * he smiles

Later still

* Dear Will, I apologise for not having been able to bring you home. I know you will be gracious in this, as in everything, but it was rude to withdraw my offer, even in the circumstances. I am glad you were offered a substitute and I hope Alana did not tire you out. I look forwards to your complete recovery. Perhaps we might discuss whether you need more groceries. Beverly kindly informed me that she did some shopping for you and that I shouldn't be too concerned. Unfortunately her description of her shopping list has done quite the opposite. She may have been teasing me. I am unclear. I hope you sleep well, and that my text has not woken you. I thought a text better than a call. Perhaps we might have a conversation at some point over the next few days. Warm wishes, Hannibal Lecter * (like Will knows an abundance of Hannibals!) Will is asleep or he'd have replied to this one.

Due to the medication and opportunities for sleep of the last few days, a regular pattern of sleeping waking and eating, and no terrible crime scene, even if he had recently been one, his night is dreamless and unbroken.

.....

Elsewhere though,

Alana is pacing her living room. She has had too much coffee and now drunk too much beer. Maybe she should... no a call this late to someone just out of hospital isn't really fair.

Beverly is slouched in her living room, also with alcohol, though in her case wine. Her room mate is laughing at her update of her workplace gossip. Shit. Bev does a ridiculous job, and has hilarious colleagues. She likes the sound of Will. It's better than a soap opera.

Hannibal is lying in his bed. He has a glorious bed. Comfortable. Warm. Inviting. Soft. Firm. Smooth. A tactile experience to savour. He is considering his experiences of the day. He glances at his phone. There is no reply from Will. Still it is 2:30 and hopefully Will has gone to sleep, properly. Without dreams or incident.

Beverly texted him earlier saying she and Alana had just left Will and that he is ok. Hannibal smiled at that. He has a powerful ally in Beverly. An ally in what enterprise he hasn't quite decided. There are many aspects of Will, not least his mind, his brain, his vibrant thinking. But Hannibal also acknowledges that he has a more physical attraction to consider. Sitting in his hospital bed he had looked both pliant and lithe. A lovely image on which to sleep. Hannibal puts down the phone on his bedside table. Turns off the light. And indulges himself in thoughts of Will's pliancy before drifting into warm aroused dreams.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!